



# ***The Communicator***

*An interagency newsletter for Greater Boston Federal employees*

10 Causeway Street, Room 1075, Boston, MA 02222

617/565-6769 <http://www.boston.feb.gov>

**SPECIAL EDITION**

## **A Note from the Chair**



*President Bush designated September 14, 2001 as a "NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND REMEMBRANCE."*

*The following is text of Chair LeBlanc's remarks at a service sponsored by the GBFEB and GSA.*

This is an important time for the Federal community to come together to provide strength and courage for one another. I am pleased to see so many friends and colleagues here today demonstrating their pride in America and in public service.

The Federal Executive Board is proud of the many public servants and other individuals who have been working under dangerous conditions tirelessly and heroically to see us through the events of this last week. Our thoughts and prayers are with our colleagues and friends who work in and around New York and Washington, DC and with the family and friends of the victims of the September 11 tragedy.

We are also proud of all of you who have helped us ensure that the essential business of government has continued despite unimaginable tragedy. It certainly has not been business as usual but we have ensured that the American people continue to have access to their government.

Many of us have our own personal stories of sorrow and pain and it is important for us to support one another. The Greater Boston Federal community lost Mr. Herb Homer, a Contract Executive at the DCMA – Raytheon. In addition, a U.S. Secret Service Agent assigned to the New York Office has been reported as missing and has roots in East

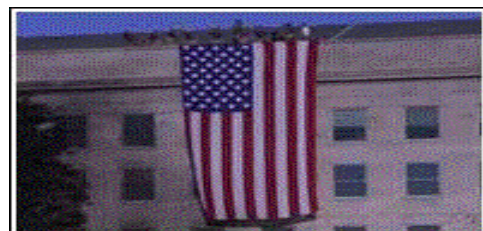
## **Diane P. LeBlanc**

Bridgewater, MA. Our thoughts are with their families.

The Federal Executive Board will host an open forum for Federal employees on Monday from 10:30 – 11:30 in the O'Neill Building Auditorium. Federal Employee Assistance Program Counselors will offer support to help employees understand and cope with the after-effects of this tragedy.

And, many of you have asked about donating blood. MA General Hospital will be here next Thursday, September 20, from 8:30 – 2:30pm. Federal managers are reminded that agencies have authority to excuse employees from work without charge to leave or loss of pay for purposes of blood donation. The increased need for blood across the country is long-term. We encourage Federal employees who cannot donate this time to consider an alternate location. And, PLEASE continue this commitment and donate blood throughout the year. Contact the American Red Cross or your local hospital for dates and locations of other drives near you.

There are a number of other ways in which to get involved. Several relief funds have been set up across the country. Organizations like the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund and the American Red Cross will offer funds and services to employees and friends across the country and continue to need volunteers and contributions. These organizations are available through our Combined Federal Campaign and we encourage you to ask your Campaign Executive about them or contact them directly. Thank you for being here today. God bless you and God Bless America.



## **GSA's Issues Travel Advisory**

*Following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the Office of Governmentwide Policy's Office of Transportation and Personal Property has issued the following travel advisory:*

As a general rule when traveling on official Government business the preferred method of transportation is by air. While traveling by air is considered a fast, economical, safe and reliable method of transportation, some travelers may be reluctant to continue a delayed trip or begin a new trip by air. Accordingly, when it is in the best interest of the Government and authorized/approved by the appropriate agency approving official on a case-by-case basis, agencies may authorize/approve an alternate mode of transportation for those travelers expressing genuine concerns about returning to their permanent duty station or beginning a new trip by air.

Travelers should also be reminded of the additional security precautions being implemented by the airlines and airports. Travelers can check the latest airport status by accessing the FAA Web site at <http://www.faa.gov>. It appears that only those passengers with tickets will be allowed access to boarding areas, so it is strongly recommended that travelers have identification and documentation (e-ticket verification invoice/itinerary) with them at all times.

Additionally, travelers should be advised to contact their Travel Management Center for changes to their travel schedules and the booking of lodging accommodations. GSA's Travel Management Center contractor, Adventure Travel, should be aware of any changes to airline, rail, and car rental industries. Contact: Jim Harte, (202) 501-0483, or e-mail: [jim.harte@gsa.gov](mailto:jim.harte@gsa.gov). with any questions.

## **MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES,  
OPM Director

SUBJECT: Blood Donation

Federal employees across the country are reacting to yesterday's tragic attacks and seeking ways to help. We will be putting out guidance to agencies on areas such as emergency leave transfer to those directly affected, excusing employees from work affected by the emergency, and making contributions through the Combined Federal Campaign. A continuing need has been identified, however, for blood donations. By donating blood, Federal employees can make a critical, personal and immediate difference to those who are in need.

At the present time, the American Red Cross is encouraging people to call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE to schedule an appointment in the coming days and weeks to replenish the blood that may be used immediately in the wake of yesterday's attacks. This number will route the donor to the nearest blood collection site. Due to the extraordinary outpouring of support by the American public, the Red Cross is experiencing higher call volumes than usual; calls will be returned and appointments scheduled as quickly as possible. The need for blood is going to be long term. Please encourage your employees to become blood donors. Heads of executive departments and agencies have authority to excuse employees from work without charge to leave or loss of pay for purposes of blood donation.

Call the Red Cross for a Blood Drive near you.  
**1 – 800 – GIVE LIFE or log onto their web  
site [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)**

**FEEA ANNOUNCES WORLD TRADE  
CENTER/PENTAGON FUND**

9/11/01-- The Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA) has announced the formation of a World Trade Center/Pentagon Fund to assist federal families affected by this morning's tragic events. Families needing assistance may contact FEEA at 1-800-323-4140 or 303-933-7580.

Donations to the fund may be made via credit card by calling FEEA at 303-933-7580 or by sending a check to:

FEEA World Trade  
Center/Pentagon Fund  
8441 W. Bowles Ave.,  
Suite 200  
Littleton, CO 80123-  
9501.

The Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund is the only non-profit, non-governmental agency whose sole mission is to provide educational and emergency financial assistance civilian federal and postal employees.

***You can visit [www.FEEA.org](http://www.FEEA.org) to  
obtain additional information or  
download the emergency  
assistance application.***

## **STATEMENT on 9-11-01 LEAVE**

`Agencies in the Washington, DC, area followed the "Washington, DC, Area Emergency Dismissal or Closure Procedures" for closure of the Federal Government as a result of the attacks on America. These procedures are available at the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) website at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2000/dismissal.htm>.

In summary, emergency employees were expected to remain at work or report for work on time. Nonemergency employees who were on duty on September 11 and who were dismissed early should be excused from work for the remainder of the workday. Employees who were absent on previously approved leave should be charged leave for the entire workday. Because of the unusual circumstances of the day's events, nonemergency employees who were prevented from reporting to work may be granted excused absence for the entire workday. Employees who left work before being dismissed by their agencies should be charged leave for the entire workday unless the agency determines that excused absence is appropriate because of unusual circumstances or hardships specific to the employee. Exceptions to these policies should be made only in unusual cases.



*Firefighters unfurl the flag over the side of the Pentagon, near the crash site.*

*Photo by Jocelyn Augustino/FEMA News Photo*

## **RELIEF EFFORTS FOR VICTIMS OF THE TERRORIST ACTIONS**

All Federal employees have the opportunity to contribute to national and local relief efforts through their participation in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Generous contributions by Federal employees to numerous relief organizations allow such groups to provide needed assistance throughout the year, as well as at specific times such as those following the horrible events of September 11, 2001.

The 2001-2002 CFC is just beginning throughout the nation. As they have done so many times in the past, Federal employees are urged to consider the CFC as a timely, convenient and secure mechanism to help our fellow citizens, now and throughout the year. In view of the magnitude of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, OPM Director Kay Coles James authorized department and agency heads to allow a special solicitation of Federal employees at the workplace. Such a special solicitation will allow Federal employees to assist the ongoing relief efforts with a one-time cash or check donation, outside the normal CFC procedures.

A number of special relief funds have been created or will be created to deal with the relief efforts. In addition, a number of existing CFC participating charities are involved. While employees can contribute directly to the charities of their choice, the CFC is uniquely equipped to receive and distribute employee contributions. Further information on the CFC, the special relief effort, and the CFC contacts for this special

solicitation authority can be found on the OPM/CFC website at [www.opm.gov/cfc](http://www.opm.gov/cfc).

### **Message to Those Who Wanted to Volunteer from FEMA Director Joe M. Allbaugh**

We have received literally hundreds -nearly a thousand e-mails from people interested in volunteering their time or donating goods and services in support of the rescue efforts in New York City and the Pentagon. At this very busy time, we are, unfortunately, unable to respond individually to each e-mail regarding this topic.

We are very gratified by your outpouring of generosity throughout America. However, the state of New York has reported that there is no additional need for volunteers or donated goods for the World Trade Center response. In addition to the federal, state and local government resources being deployed to the scene, there are a considerable number of goods and services already in the pipeline.

The same situation exists at the Pentagon and no volunteers or donations are needed there at this time.

However, the public is encouraged to make financial contributions. You can call the New York state donations coordination hotline at 1-800-801-8092. To make contributions to help the federal victims at the Pentagon or the World Trade Center, send your checks to: FEEA; World Trade Center/Pentagon Fund, 8441 West Bowles Avenue, Suite 200, Littleton, Colorado, 80123.

For further information about blood donation needs, call 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

Again, thank you so much for your concern and support for those affected by the disaster and for those working to rescue victims.

## **FEMA Offers Advice On How To Talk To Children About Terrorist Attacks**

*Washington, D.C., September 12, 2001* – The terrorist events in New York and Washington, D.C., have not spared the children of the nation. They have seen the terrible television pictures and heard the adults in their lives discussing the tragic events. Yet many adults don't know how to talk to children about the disaster, or don't know how to recognize that their children are feeling distress.

FEMA for Kids, the part of the FEMA web site devoted to children, offers advice on how parents can discuss terrorism to their children. The site also includes general guidelines about dealing with disasters' impact on children and an opportunity for schools to submit artwork children have done in an effort to share their feelings. The address for the site is: [www.fema.gov/kids](http://www.fema.gov/kids).

"Children affected by disasters may suddenly act younger than they are or may appear stoic – not crying or expressing concern," said Holly Harrington, the FEMA for Kids manager. "Parents can help their children by talking to them, keeping them close and even spoiling them for a little while. We also advise that children not be overexposed to the news coverage of the terrorist events."

Talking to children about terrorism can be particularly problematic since providing them with safety guidelines to protect themselves from terrorism is difficult. According to psychologists, questions about terrorism are teaching opportunities. Adults should answer questions about terrorism by providing understandable information and realistic reassurance. And children don't need to be overwhelmed with information, so less is better than more in terms of details.

**Children may exhibit these behaviors after  
a disaster:**

1. Change from being quiet, obedient and caring to loud, noisy and aggressive or may change from being outgoing to shy and afraid.
2. Develop nighttime fears, have nightmares or bad dreams.
3. Be afraid the event will reoccur.
4. Become easily upset, crying and whining.
5. Lose trust in adults. After all, their adults were not able to control the disaster.
6. Revert to younger behavior such as bed wetting and thumb sucking.
7. Not want parents out of their sight and refuse to go to school or childcare.
8. Have symptoms of illness, such as headaches, vomiting or fever.
9. Worry about where they and their family will live.

**What to do:**

1. Talk with the children about how they are feeling and listen without judgment.
2. Let the children take their time to figure things out. Don't rush them.
3. Help them learn to use words that express their feelings, such as happy, sad, angry or mad.
4. Assure children that you will be there to take care of them. Reassure them often.
5. Stay together as a family as much as possible.
6. Let them have some control, such as choosing what outfit to wear or what meal to have for dinner.
7. Encourage the children to give or send pictures they have drawn or things they have written.
8. Help children regain faith in the future by helping them develop plans for activities that will take place later - next week, next month.
9. Allow the children to grieve losses.



Clip and Save on Rolodex

**Greater Boston Federal Executive Board**

T.P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building

10 Causeway Street, Suite 1075

Boston, MA 02222

(617) 565-6769 Phone

617/565-7648 Fax

[kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov](mailto:kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov)

**The Greater Boston Federal Executive Board publishes “THE COMMUNICATOR” monthly as a cost-effective tool for communicating events and issues of importance to the local Federal community at-large.**

If you have news of interest to the Federal community, please contact the FEB at 617/565-6769 or fax your news to 617/565-7648 / email [kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov](mailto:kim.ainsworth@gsa.gov)

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